

## **WEATHER OBSERVATION**

**8613**

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All lookouts have a responsibility to monitor weather conditions. Some may not have to record any regular weather observations, but all lookouts need to be aware of the weather around them so they can recognize and report significant changes.

Depending on a unit's needs, lookouts provide a wide range of weather observations. Some provide simple temperature and wind data. Others are full weather sampling stations which may provide information to the National Weather Service or data which is entered into the National Fire Danger Rating System network. Many lookouts provide weather information which helps determine unit dispatch levels.

In every case, the weather information must be accurate. Uniform standards and procedures have been developed to minimize common errors. These standards and procedures are explained in detail in the USDA Forest Service Handbook No. 494, Fire Weather Observers' Handbook. Standards include knowledge of the instruments, proper installation, operation, and maintenance.

The lookout must be properly trained to take accurate weather observations and therefore must work closely with the unit fire weather specialist to obtain the required weather data, record it, and transmit it to appropriate personnel through channels.

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